

HENRY & EMMA.

A POEM.

UPON THE MODEL OF THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

BY MATTHEW PRIOR.

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1793.



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HENRY AND EMMA.

TO CLOE.

Thou, to whose eyes I bend, at whose command
Tho' low my voice, tho' artless be my hand)
I take the sprightly reed, and sing and play,
Careless of what the cens'ring world may say;
Bright Cloe! object of my constant vow, 5
Wilt thou a while unbend thy serious brow?
Wilt thou with pleasure hear thy lover's strains,
And with one heav'nly smile o'erpay his pains?
No longer shall the Nut-brown Maid be old,
Tho' since her youth three hundred years have roll'd :
At thy desire she shall again be rais'd, 11
And her reviving charms in lasting verse be prais'd.
No longer man of woman shall complain,
That he may love and not be lov'd again;
That we in vain the fickle sex pursue, 15
Who change the constant lover for the new.
Whatever has been writ, whatever said
Of female passion feign'd, or faith decay'd,
Henceforth shall in my verse refuted stand,
Be said to winds, or writ upon the sand : 20
And while my notes to future times proclaim
Unconquer'd love and ever during flame,
O, fairest of the sex! be thou my Muse;
Deign on my work thy influence to diffuse :
Let me partake the blessings I rehearse, 25
And grant me, Love, the just reward of verse.

As Beauty's potent queen with ev'ry grace
That once was Emma's has adorn'd thy face,
And as her son has to my bosom dealt
That constant flame which faithful Henry felt,
O let the story with thy life agree,
Let men once more the bright example see ;
What Emma was to him be thou to me :
Nor send me by thy frown from her I love,
Distant and sad, a banish'd man to rove :
But, oh ! with pity long entreated crown
My pains and hopes ; and when thou say'st that one
Of all mankind thou lov'st, oh ! think on me alone.

WHERE beauteous Isis and her husband Thame
With mingled waves for ever flow the same,
In times of yore an ancient baron liv'd,
Great gifts bestow'd, and great respect receiv'd.

When dreadful Edward with successful care
Led his free Britons to the Gallick war,
This Lord had headed his appointed bands,
In firm allegiance to his king's commands,
And (all due honours faithfully discharg'd)
Had brought back his paternal coat, enlarg'd
With a new mark, the witness of his toil,
And no inglorious part of foreign spoil.

From the loud camp retir'd and noisy court,
In honourable ease and rural sport
The remnant of his days he safely past,
Nor found they lagg'd too slow nor flew too fast ;
He made his wish with his estate comply,
Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die.

One child he had, a daughter, chaste and fair,
His age's comfort, and his fortune's heir :
They call'd her Emma, for the beauteous dame
Who gave the virgin birth had borne the name ;
The name th' indulgent father doubly lov'd,
For in the child the mother's charms improv'd :
Yet as when little round his knees she play'd,

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He call'd her oft', in sport, his Nut-brown Maid;
The friends and tenants took the fondling word, 65
(As still they please who imitate their Lord)

Usage confirm'd what Fancy had begun;
The mutual terms around the lands were known, }
And Emma and the Nut-brown Maid were one. }

As with her stature still her charms increas'd, 70
Thro' all the isle her beauty was confess'd.

Oh! what perfections must that virgin share
Who fairest is esteem'd where all are fair?

From distant shires repair the noble youth,
And find report for once had lessen'd truth. 75

By wonder first, and then by passion mov'd,
They came, they saw, they marvell'd, and they lov'd.

By publick praises and by secret sighs
Each own'd the general pow'r of Emma's eyes.

In tilts and tournaments the valiant strove 80
By glorious deeds to purchase Emma's love.

In gentle verse the witty told their flame,
And grac'd their choicest songs with Emma's name.

In vain they combated, in vain they writ,
Useless their strength, and impotent their wit: 85

Great Venus only must direct the dart,
Which else will never reach the fair one's heart, }

Spite of th' attempts of Force and soft effects of Art: }

Great Venus must prefer the happy one; }

In Henry's cause her favour must be shown, 90 }

And Emma, of mankind, must love but him alone. }

While these in publick to the castle came,
And by their grandeur justify'd their flame,
More secret ways the careful Henry takes;

His 'squires, his arms, and equipage, forsakes. 95
In borrow'd name and false attire array'd,

Oft' he finds means to see the beauteous maid.
When Emma hunts, in huntsman's habit drest,
Henry on foot pursues the bounding beast;

In his right hand his beechen pole he bears, 100
And graceful at his side his horn he wears.

* * * * *

Still to the glade where she has bent her way
 With knowing skill he drives the future prey ;
 Bids her decline the hill and shun the brake,
 And shews the path her steed may safest take ; 10
 Directs her spear to fix the glorious wound,
 Pleas'd in his toils to have her triumph crown'd,
 And blows her praises in no common sound.

A falc'ner Henry is when Emma hawks ;
 With her of tarsels and of lures he talks : 11
 Upon his wrists the tow'ring merlin stands,
 Practis'd to rise and stoop at her commands :
 And when superior now the bird has flown,
 And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down,
 With humble rev'rence he accosts the fair, 12
 And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.
 Yet still as from the sportive field she goes,
 His downcast eye reveals his inward woes ;
 And by his look and sorrow is exprest
 A nobler game pursu'd than bird or beast. 13

A shepherd now along the plain he roves,
 And with his jolly pipe delights the groves.
 The neighb'ring swains around the stranger throng,
 Or to admire or emulate his song ; 14
 While with soft sorrow he renews his lays,
 Nor heedful of their envy nor their praise :
 But soon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,
 His notes he raises to a nobler strain,
 With dutiful respect and studious fear,
 Lest any careless sound offend her ear. 15

A frantick gipsy now the house he haunts,
 And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants.
 With the fond maids in palmistry he deals ;
 They tell the secret first which he reveals ;
 Says who shall wed, and who shall be beguil'd ; 16
 What groom shall get, and 'squire maintain, the child
 But when bright Emma would her fortune know,
 A softer look unbends his op'ning brow :
 With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,

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And in soft accents forms the kind reply, 140
That she shall prove as fortunate as fair,
And Hymen's choicest gifts are all reserv'd for her.

Now oft' had Henry chang'd his sly disguise,
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes;
Oft' had found means alone to see the dame, 145
And at her feet to breathe his am'rous flame;

And oft' the pangs of absence to remove
By letters, soft interpreters of love;
Till time and industry (the mighty two
That bring our wishes nearer to our view) 150

Made him perceive that the inclining fair
Receiv'd his vows with no reluctant ear;
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,
And dealt to Emma's heart a share of Henry's pain.

While Cupid smil'd by kind occasion bless'd, 155
And with the secret kept the love increas'd,

The am'rous youth frequents the silent groves,
And much he meditates, for much he loves.
He loves, 'tis true, and is belov'd again;
Great are his joys; but will they long remain? 160

Emma with smiles receives his present flame,
But, smiling, will she ever be the same?

Beautiful looks are rul'd by fickle minds,
And summer seas are turn'd by sudden winds:
Another love may gain her easy youth; - 165

Time changes thought, and Flattery conquers Truth.

O impotent estate of human life!
Where hope and fear maintain eternal strife;
Where fleeting joy does lasting doubt inspire,
And most we question what we most desire. 170

Amongst thy various gifts, great Heav'n! bestow
Our cup of love unmix'd; forbear to throw
Bitter ingredients in, nor pall the draught

With nauseous grief; for our ill-judging thought
Hardly enjoys the pleasurable taste, 175
Or deems it not sincere or fears it cannot last.

With wishes rais'd, with jealousies oppress,

HENRY AND EMMA.

(Alternate tyrants of the human breast)

By one great trial he resolves to prove

The faith of woman and the force of love :

If, scanning Emma's virtues, he may find

That beauteous frame enclose a steady mind,

He 'll fix his hope, of future joy secure,

And live a slave to Hymen's happy power ;

But if the fair one, as he fears, is frail,

If pois'd aright in Reason's equal scale,

Light fly her merits, and her faults prevail,

His mind he vows to free from am'rous care,

The latent mischief from his heart to tear,

Resume his azure arms, and shine again in war.

South of the castle in a verdant glade,

A spreading beech extends her friendly shade ;

Here oft' the nymph his breathing vows had heard

Here oft' her silence had her heart declar'd.

As active Spring awak'd her infant buds,

And genial Life inform'd the verdant woods,

Henry, in knots involving Emma's name,

Had half express'd and half conceal'd his flame

Upon this tree ; and as the tender mark

Grew with the year, and widen'd with the bark,

Venus had heard the virgin's soft address,

That, as the wound, the passion might increase.

As potent Nature shed her kindly show'rs,

And deck'd the various mead with op'ning flow'rs,

Upon this tree the nymph's obliging care

Had left a frequent wreath for Henry's hair,

Which as with gay delight the lover found,

Pleas'd with his conquest, with her present crown'd

Glorious thro' all the plains he oft' had gone,

And to each swain the mystick honour shown,

The gift still prais'd, the giver still unknown.

His secret note the troubled Henry writes ;

To the known tree the lovely maid invites :

Imperfect words and dubious terms express

That unforeseen mischance disturb'd his peace ;

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That he must something to her ear commend,
On which her conduct and his life depend.

Soon as the fair one had the note receiv'd,
The remnant of the day, alone, she griev'd ;
For diff'rent this from ev'ry former note 220
Which Venus dictated and Henry wrote ;
Which told her all his future hopes were laid
On the dear bosom of his Nut-brown Maid ;
Which always bless'd her eyes and own'd her pow'r,
And bid her oft' adieu, yet added more. 225

Now night advanc'd : the house in sleep were laid,
The nurse experienc'd, and the prying maid ;
And, last, that sprite which does incessant haunt
The lover's steps, the ancient maiden aunt.

To her dear Henry Emma wings her way, 230
With quicken'd pace repairing forc'd delay :
For Love, fantastick pow'r, that is afraid
To stir abroad till Watchfulness be laid,
Undaunted then o'er cliffs and vallies strays,
And leads his votaries safe thro' pathless ways. 235
Not Argus with his hundred eyes shall find
Where Cupid goes, tho' he, poor guide, is blind.

The maiden first arriving, sent her eye
To ask if yet its chief delight were nigh :
With fear and with desire, with joy and pain, 240
She sees, and runs to meet him on the plain ;
But, oh ! his steps proclaim no lover's haste ;
On the low ground his fix'd regards are cast ;
His artful bosom heaves dissembled sighs,
And tears suborn'd fall copious from his eyes. 245

With ease, alas ! we credit what we love ;
His painted grief does real sorrow move
In the afflicted fair : adown her cheek
Trickling the genuine tears their current break !
Attentive stood the mournful nymph ; the man 250
Broke silence first ; the tale alternate ran.

Hen. Sincere, O tell me, hast thou felt a pain,
Emma, beyond what woman knows to feign !

.....

Has thy uncertain bosom ever strove
 With the first tumults of a real love ?
 Hast thou now dreaded and now blest his sway,
 By turns averse and joyful to obey ?
 Thy virgin softness hast thou e'er bewail'd,
 As reason yielded and as love prevail'd ?
 And wept the potent god's resistless dart,
 His killing pleasure, his ecstatick smart,
 And heav'nly poison thrilling thro' thy heart ?
 If so, with pity view my wretched state,
 At least deplore, and then forget my fate :
 To some more happy knight reserve thy charms,
 By Fortune favour'd and successful arms ;
 And only as the sun's revolving ray
 Brings back each year this melancholy day,
 Permit one sigh, and set apart one tear
 To an abandon'd exile's endless care.
 For me, alas ! outcast of human race,
 Love's anger only waits and dire disgrace ;
 For, lo ! these hands in murther are imbru'd,
 These trembling feet by Justice are pursu'd :
 Fate calls aloud, and hastens me away ;
 A shameful death attends my longer stay ;
 And I this night must fly from thee and love,
 Condemn'd in lonely woods a banish'd man to rove
Emma. What is our bliss that changeth with the
 And day of life that darkens ere 't is noon ? [moon
 What is true passion, if unblest it dies ?
 And where is Emma's joy if Henry flies ?
 If love, alas ! be pain, the pain I bear
 No thought can figure, and no tongue declare.
 Ne'er faithful woman felt, nor false one feign'd,
 The flames which long have in my bosom reign'd
 The god of Love himself inhabits there,
 With all his rage, and dread, and grief, and care,
 His complement of stores and total war.
 O ! cease then coldly to suspect my love,
 And let my deed, at least, my faith approve.

...~*~*~*~...

alas ! no youth shall my endearments share,
 nor day nor night shall interrupt my care ;
 no future story shall with truth upbraid
 the cold indiff'rence of the Nut-brown Maid ; 295
 nor to hard banishment shall Henry run
 while careless Emma sleeps on beds of down.
 Few me resolv'd where'er thou lead'st to go,
 friend to thy pain, and partner of thy wo ;
 nor I attest fair Venus and her son, 300
 that I of all mankind will love but thee alone.
Hen. Let prudence yet obstruct thy vent'rous way,
 and take good heed what men will think and say ;
 that beauteous Emma vagrant courses took,
 her father's house and civil life forsook ; 305
 that full of youthful blood, and fond of man,
 she to the woodland with an exile ran.
 reflect, that lessen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,
 and virgin-honour once, is always stain'd :
 timely advis'd, the coming evil shun ; 310
 better not do the deed than weep it done :
 no penance can absolve our guilty fame,
 nor tears, that wash our sin, can wash our shame :
 when fly the sad effects of desp'rate love, 314
 and leave a banish'd man thro' lonely woods to rove.
Emma. Let Emma's hapless case be falsely told
 by the rash young or the ill-natur'd old ;
 let ev'ry tongue its various censures chuse,
 resolve with coldness, or with spite accuse ;
 nor Truth at last her radiant beams will raise, 320
 and Malice vanquish'd heightens Virtue's praise.
 let then thy favour but indulge my flight,
 let my presence make thy travels light,
 and potent Venus shall exalt my name
 above the rumours of censorious Fame ; 325
 nor from that busy demon's restless pow'r
 will ever Emma other grace implore,
 than that this truth should to the world be known,
 that I of all mankind have lov'd but thee alone. 329

Hen. But canst thou wield the sword and bend
 With active force repel the sturdy foe? [bow
 When the loud tumult speaks the battle nigh,
 And winged death in whistling arrows fly,
 Wilt thou, tho' wounded, yet undaunted stay,
 Perform thy part, and share the dang'rous day? 3
 Then, as thy strength decays, thy heart will fail,
 Thy limbs all trembling, and thy cheeks all pale;
 With fruitless sorrow thou, inglorious Maid,
 Wilt weep thy safety by thy love betray'd;
 Then to thy friend, by foes o'ercharg'd deny 3
 Thy little useless aid, and coward fly;
 Then wilt thou curse the chance that made thee lo
 A banish'd man, condemn'd in lonely woods to rove

Emma. With fatal certainty Thalestris knew
 To send the arrow from the twanging yew: 3
 And, great in arms, and foremost in the war,
 Bonduca brandish'd high the British spear.
 Could thirst of vengeance and desire of fame
 Excite the female breast with martial flame?
 And shall not Love's diviner pow'r inspire 3
 More hardy virtue and more gen'rous fire?

Near thee, mistrust not, constant I'll abide,
 And fall or vanquish, fighting by thy side.
 Tho' my inferior strength may not allow
 That I should bear or draw the warriour bow, 3
 With ready hand I will the shaft supply,
 And joy to see thy victor arrows fly.
 Touch'd in the battle by the hostile reed,
 Shouldst thou, (but Heav'n avert it!) shouldst thou
 To stop the wounds my finest lawn I'd tear, [ble
 Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my ha
 Blest when my dangers and my toils have shown
 That I, of all mankind, could love but thee alone

Hen. But canst thou, tender Maid, canst thou sust
 Afflictive want, or hunger's pressing pain?
 Those limbs, in lawn and softest silk array'd,
 From sunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid,

Can they bear angry Jove ? can they resist
 The parching Dogstar and the bleak North-east ?
 When, chill'd by adverse snows and beating rain, 370
 We tread with wearied steps the longsome plain ;
 When with hard toil we seek our ev'ning food,
 Berries and acorns, from the neighb'ring wood,
 And find among the cliffs no other house
 But the thin covert of some gather'd boughs, 375
 Wilt thou not then reluctant send thine eye
 Around the dreary waste, and weeping try
 (Tho' then, alas ! that trial be too late)
 To find thy father's hospitable gate,
 And seats where Ease and Plenty brooding sat ? 380
 Those seats whence, long excluded, thou must mourn ;
 That gate for ever barr'd to thy return ;
 Will thou not then bewail ill-fated love,
 And hate a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove ?

Emma. Thy rise of fortune did I only wed, 385
 From its decline determin'd to recede ;
 Did I but purpose to embark with thee
 On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,
 While gentle zephyrs play in prosp'rous gales,
 And Fortune's favour fills the swelling sails, 390
 But would forsake the ship and make the shore,
 When the winds whistle and the tempests roar ?
 No, Henry, no : one sacred oath has ty'd
 Our loves ; one destiny our life shall guide ;
 Nor wild nor deep our common way divide. 395

When from the cave thou risest with the day
 To beat the woods and rouse the bounding prey,
 The cave with moss and branches I 'll adorn,
 And cheerful sit to wait my Lord's return.
 And when thou frequent bring'st the smittendeer, 400
 (For seldom, archers say, thy arrows err)
 I'll fetch quick fuel from the neighb'ring wood,
 And strike the sparkling flint, and dress the food :
 With humble duty and officious haste
 I'll cull the furthest mead for thy repast ; 405

..>...<...<...

The choicest herbs I to thy board will bring,
 And draw thy water from the freshest spring :
 And when at night, with weary toil opprest,
 Soft slumbers thou enjoy'st and wholesome rest,
 Watchful I'll guard thee, and with midnight pray'r⁴¹⁰
 Weary the gods to keep thee in their care ;
 And joyous ask at morn's returning ray
 If thou hast health, and I may bless the day.
 My thoughts shall fix, my latest wish depend⁴¹⁴
 On thee, guide, guardian, kinsman, father, friend :
 By all these sacred names be Henry known
 To Emma's heart ; and, grateful, let him own
 That she, of all mankind, could love but him alone. }

Hen. Vainly thou tell'st me what the woman's care
 Shall in the wildness of the wood prepare :⁴²²
 Thou, ere thou goest, unhappiest of thy kind,
 Must leave the habit and the sex behind.
 No longer shall thy comely tresses break,
 In flowing ringlets on thy snowy neck,
 Or sit behind thy head, an ample round,⁴²⁵
 In graceful braids, with various riband bound ;
 No longer shall the bodice aptly lac'd
 From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,
 That air and harmony of shape express,
 Fine by degrees, and beautifully less ;⁴³⁰
 Nor shall thy lower garments artful plait,
 From thy fair side dependent to thy feet,
 Arm their chaste beauties with a modest pride,
 And double ev'ry charm they seek to hide.
 Th' ambrosial plenty of thy shining hair⁴³⁵
 Cropt off and lost, scarce lower than thy ear
 Shall stand uncouth ; a horseman's coat shall hide
 Thy taper shape and comeliness of side ;
 The short trunk-hose shall show thy foot and knee
 Licentious, and to common eyesight free ;⁴⁴⁰
 And with a bolder stride and looser air,
 Mingled with men, a man thou must appear.

→→→←←←

Nor solitude, nor gentle peace of mind,
 Mistaken Maid, shalt thou in forests find :
 'T is long since Cynthia and her train were there, 445
 Or guardian gods made innocence their care :
 Vagrants and outlaws shall offend thy view,
 For such must be my friends ; a hideous crew,
 By adverse fortune mixt in social ill,
 Train'd to assault, and disciplin'd to kill ; 450
 Their common loves a lewd abandon'd pack,
 The beadle's lash still flagrant on their back ;
 By sloth corrupted, by disorder fed,
 Made bold by want, and prostitute for bread :
 With such must Emma hunt the tedious day, 455
 Assist their violence and divide their prey ;
 With such she must return at setting light,
 Tho' not partaker, witness of their night.
 Thy ear, inur'd to charitable sounds

And pitying love, must feel the hateful wounds 460
 Of jest obscene and vulgar ribaldry,
 The ill-bred question and the lewd reply ;
 Brought by long habitude from bad to worse,
 Must hear the frequent oath, the direful curse,
 That latest weapon of the wretches' war, 465
 And blasphemy, sad comrade of despair.

Now, Emma, now the last reflection make,
 What thou would'st follow, what thou must forsake :
 By our ill-omen'd stars and adverse heav'n
 No middle object to thy choice is giv'n : 470
 Or yield thy virtue to attain thy love,
 Or leave a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove.

Emma. O grief of heart ! that our unhappy fates
 Force thee to suffer what thy honour hates ;
 Mix thee amongst the bad, or make thee run 475
 Too near the paths which Virtue bids thee shun.
 Yet with her Henry still let Emma go ;
 With him abhor the vice, but share the wo :
 And sure my little heart can never err
 Amidst the worst, if Henry still be there. 480

—•••••—

Our outward act is prompted from within,
And from the sinner's mind proceeds the sin :
By her own choice free Virtue is approv'd,
Nor by the force of outward objects mov'd.
Who has assay'd no danger gains no praise.

485

In a small isle, amidst the widest seas,
Triumphant Constancy has fixt her seat;
In vain the Syrens sing, the tempests beat :
Their flatt'ry she rejects, nor fears their threat.

}

For thee alone these little charms I drest,
Condemn'd them or absolv'd them by thy test :
In comely figure rang'd my jewels shone,
Or negligently plac'd, for thee alone :

490

For thee again they shall be laid aside ;
The woman, Henry, shall put off her pride

495

For thee : my clothes, my sex, exchang'd for thee,

I'll mingle with the people's wretched lee :

O line extreme of human infamy !

}

Wanting the scissors, with these hands I'll tear
(If that obstructs my flight) this load of hair :

500

Black soot or yellow walnut shall disgrace

This little red and white of Emma's face :

These nails with scratches shall deform my breast,

Lest by my look or colour be exprest

504

The mark of ought high-born, or ever better drest.

}

Yet in this commerce, under this disguise,

Let me be grateful still to Henry's eyes ;

Lost to the world, let me to him be known ;

My fate I can absolve if he shall own

509

That, leaving all mankind, I love but him alone.

}

Hen. O wildest thought of an abandon'd mind !

Name, habit, parents, woman, left behind,

Ev'n honour dubious, thou prefer'st to go

Wild to the woods with me. Said Emma so ?

Or did I dream what Emma never said ?

O guilty error ! and O wretched Maid !

Whose roving fancy would resolve the same
 With him who next should tempt her easy fame,
 And blow with empty words the susceptible flame.
 Now why should doubtful terms thy mind perplex?
 Confess thy frailty, and avow the sex :

No longer loose desire for constant love [rove.
 Mistake, but say, 't is man with whom thou long'st to

Emma. Are there not poisons, racks, and flames, and
 That Emma thus must die by Henry's words; [swords,
 Yet what could swords or poisons, racks or flame,
 But mangle and disjoint this brittle frame! [fame.
 More fatal Henry's words, they murder Emma's

And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,
 Where civil speech and soft persuasion hung? 530
 Whose artful sweetness and harmonious strain,
 Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,
 Call'd sighs, and tears, and wishes, to its aid,
 And, whilst it Henry's glowing flame convey'd,
 Still blam'd the coldness of the nut-brown maid?

Let envious Jealousy and canker'd Spite, 536
 Produce my actions to severest light,
 And tax my open day or secret night.
 Did e'er my tongue speak my unguarded heart
 The least inclin'd to play the wanton's part? 540
 Did e'er my eye one inward thought reveal,
 Which angels might not hear and virgins tell?
 And hast thou, Henry, in my conduct known
 One fault but that which I must ever own, 544
 That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone?

Hen. Vainly thou talk'st of loving me alone;
 Each man is man, and all our sex is one;
 False are our words, and fickle is our mind;
 Nor in Love's ritual can we ever find
 Vows made to last, or promises to bind. 550

By Nature prompted, and for empire made,
 Alike by strength or cunning we invade:
 When arm'd with rage we march against the foe,
 We lift the battle-axe and draw the bow;

..♦♦♦♦♦

When fir'd with passion we attack the fair, 555
 Delusive sighs and brittle vows we bear;
 Our falsehood and our arms have equal use,
 As they our conquest or delight produce.

The foolish heart thou gav'st again receive,
 The only boon departing Love can give. 560

To be less wretched be no longer true;
 What strives to fly thee why shouldst thou pursue? }
 Forget the present flame, indulge a new :

Single the loveliest of the am'rous youth;
 Ask for his vow, but hope not for his truth. 565

The next man (and the next thou shalt believe) }
 Will pawn his gods, intending to deceive;
 Will kneel, implore, persist, o'ercome, and leave. }

Hence let thy Cupid aim his arrows right;
 Be wise and false, shun trouble, seek delight; 570 }
 Change thou the first, nor wait thy lover's flight. }

Why should'st thou weep? let Nature judge our case;

I saw thee young and fair; pursu'd the chase
 Of youth and beauty: I another saw

Fairer and younger: yielding to the law 575
 Of our all-ruling Mother, I pursu'd

More youth, more beauty. Blest vicissitude!

My active heart still keeps its pristine flame,

The object alter'd, the desire the same.

This younger, fairer, pleads her rightful charms,
 With present power compels me to her arms; 581

And much I fear from my subjected mind,

(If beauty's force to constant-love can bind)

That years may roll ere in her turn the maid
 Shall weep the fury of my love decay'd, 585

And weeping follow me, as thou dost now,

With idle clamours of a broken vow.

Nor can the wildness of thy wishes err,

So wide to hope that thou may'st live with her:
 Love, well thou know'st, no partnership allows; 599

Cupid averse, rejects divided vows:

Then from thy foolish heart, vain Maid, remove }
 An useless sorrow and an ill-starr'd love, [rove. }
 And leave me, with the fair, at large in woods to }

Emma. Are we in life thro' one great error led ? 595
 Is each man perjur'd, and each nymph betray'd ?
 Of the superior sex art thou the worst ?

Am I of mine the most completely curst ?
 Yet let me go with thee, and going prove,
 From what I will endure, how much I love. 600

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,
 This happy object of our diff'rent care,
 Her let me follow ; her let me attend,
 A servant : (she may scorn the name of friend)
 What she demands incessant I 'll prepare ; 605
 I'll wave her garlands, and I 'll plait her hair :
 My busy diligence shall deck her board,
 For there at least I may approach my lord)
 And when her Henry's softer hours advise
 His servant's absence, with dejected eyes 610 }
 Far I 'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise.

Yet, when increasing grief brings slow disease,
 And ebbing life, on terms severe as these,
 Will have its little lamp no longer fed ;
 When Henry's mistress shows him Emma dead, 615
 Rescue my poor remains from vile neglect :
 With virgin honours let my hearse be deckt,
 And decent emblem ; and, at least, persuade
 This happy nymph that Emma may be laid
 Where thou, dear author of my death, where she 620
 With frequent eye my sepulchre may see.
 The nymph, amidst her joys, may haply breathe
 One pious sigh, reflecting on my death,
 And the sad fate which she may one day prove,
 Who hopes from Henry's vows eternal love. 625
 And thou forsworn, thou cruel, as thou art,
 If Emma's image ever touch'd thy heart,
 Thou sure must give one thought, and drop one tear
 To her whom love abandon'd to despair ;

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To her who dying on the wounded stone 630 }
 Bid it in lasting characters be known }
 That of mankind she lov'd but thee alone. }

Hen. Hear, solemn Jove, and, conscious Venus, hear;
 And thou, bright Maid, believe me whilst I swear;
 No time, no change, no future flame, shall move 635 }
 The well-plac'd basis of my lasting love. }
 O pow'rful Virtue! O victorious Fair! }
 At least excuse a trial too severe; }
 Receive the triumph, and forget the war. }

No banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove, 640 }
 Entreats thy pardon, and implores thy love: }
 No perjur'd knight desires to quit thy arms, }
 Fairest collection of thy sex's charms, }
 Crown of my love, and honour of my youth; }
 Henry, thy Henry, with eternal truth, 645 }
 As thou may'st wish, shall all his life employ, }
 And found his glory in his Emma's joy. }

In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
 Illustrious earl: him terrible in war,
 Let Loyre confess, for she has felt his sword, 650 }
 And trembling fled before the British lord. }
 Him great in peace and wealth fair Deva knows,
 For she amidst his spacious meadows flows,
 Inclines her urn upon his fatten'd lands,
 And sees his num'rous herds imprint her sands. 655 }

And thou, my Fair, my Dove, shalt raise thy thought
 To greatness next to empire; shalt be brought
 With solemn pomp to my paternal seat,
 Where peace and plenty on thy word shall wait:
 Musick and song shall wake the marriage-day, 660 }
 And while the priests accuse the bride's delay, }
 Myrtles and roses shall obstruct her way. }

Friendship shall still thy ev'ning feasts adorn,
 And blooming Peace shall ever bless thy morn;
 Succeeding years their happy race shall run, 665 }
 And Age unheeded by delight come on, }

While yet superiour love shall mock his pow'r;
 And when old Time shall turn the fated hour,
 Which only can our well-ty'd knot unfold,
 What rests of both one sepulchre shall hold. 670

Hence, then, for ever, from my Emma's breast
 (That heav'n of softness, and that seat of rest)
 Ye doubts and fears, and all that know to move
 Tormenting grief, and all that trouble love; 674 }
 Scatter'd by winds recede, and wild in forests rove, }

Emma. O day! the fairest sure that ever rose!
 Period and end of anxious Emma's woes!
 Sire of her joy, and source of her delight,
 O! wing'd with pleasure, take thy happy flight, }
 And give each future morn a tincture of thy white. }

Yet tell thy vot'ry, potent queen of Love, 681
 Henry, my Henry, will he never rove?
 Will he be ever kind, and just, and good?
 And is there yet no mistress in the wood?
 None, none there is: the thought was rash and vain,
 A false idea, and a fancy'd pain, 686

Doubt shall for ever quit my strengthen'd heart,
 And anxious Jealousy's corroding smart;
 Nor other inmate shall inhabit there,
 But soft Belief, young Joy, and pleasing Care. 690

Hence let the tides of plenty ebb and flow,
 And Fortune's various gale unheeded blow.
 If at my feet the suppliant goddess stands
 And sheds her treasure with unweary'd hands,
 Her present favour cautious I'll embrace, 695

And not unthankful use the proffer'd grace;
 If she reclaims the temporary boon,
 And tries her pinions, flutt'ring to be gone,
 Secure of mind I'll obviate her intent,
 And unconcern'd return the goods she lent. 700

Nor happiness can I, nor misery, feel,
 From any turn of her fantastick wheel:
 Friendship's great laws, and Love's superiour pow'rs,
 Must mark the colour of my future hours.

From the events which thy commands create 705 }
 I must my blessings or my sorrows date,
 And Henry's will must dictate Emma's fate. }

Yet while with close delight and inward pride
 (Which from the world my careful soul shall hide)
 I see thee, lord and end of my desire, 710
 Exalted high as virtue can require,
 With pow'r invested, and with pleasure cheer'd,
 Sought by the good, by the oppressor fear'd,
 Loaded and blest with all the affluent store 714
 Which human vows at smoking shrines implore;
 Grateful and humble grant me to employ
 My life subservient only to thy joy,
 And at my death to bless thy kindness, shown
 To her who, of mankind, could love but thee alone.

WHILE thus the constant pair alternate said, 720
 Joyful above them and around them play'd
 Angels and sportive Loves, a num'rous crowd;
 Smiling they clapt their wings, and low they bow'd:
 They tumbled all their little quivers o'er,
 To chuse propitious shafts, a precious store, 725
 That when their god should take his future darts,
 To strike (however rarely) constant hearts,
 His happy skill might proper arms employ,
 All tipt with pleasure, and all wing'd with joy; 729
 And those, they vow'd, whose lives should imitate
 These lovers' constancy, should share their fate.

The queen of Beauty stopp'd her bridled doves,
 Approv'd the little Labour of the Loves;
 Was proud and pleas'd the mutual vow to hear, }
 And to the triumph call'd the god of War: 735 }
 Soon as she calls, the god is always near. }

Now Mars, she said, let Fame exalt her voice,
 Nor let thy conquests only be her choice,
 But when she sings great Edward from the field
 Return'd, the hostile spear and captive shield 740
 In Concord's temple hung, and Gallia taught to
 yield.

And when, as prudent Saturn shall complete
 The years design'd to perfect Britain's state,
 The swift-wing'd Power shall take her trump again,
 To sing her fav'rite Anna's wondrous reign, 745
 To recollect unweary'd Marlbrô's toils,
 Old Rufus' Hall unequal to his spoils,
 The British soldier from his high command
 Glorious, and Gaul thrice vanquish'd by his hand,
 Let her at least perform what I desire, 750
 With second breath the vocal brass inspire,
 And tell the nations in no vulgar strain,
 What wars I manage and what wreaths I gain.
 And when thy tumults and thy fights are past,
 And when thy laurels at my feet are cast; 755
 Faithful may'st thou, like British Henry prove,
 And Emma-like let me return thy love.

Renown'd for truth let all thy sons appear,
 And constant beauty shall reward their care.

Mars smil'd, and bow'd : the Cyprian deity 760
 Turn'd to the glorious ruler of the sky;
 And thou, she smiling said, great god of Days
 And Verse, behold my deed, and sing my praise ;
 As on the British earth, my fav'rite isle,
 Thy gentle rays and kindest influence smile, 765
 Thro' all her laughing fields and verdant groves,
 Proclaim with joy these memorable loves :
 From ev'ry annual course let one great day
 To celebrated sports and floral play
 Be set aside ; and in the softest lays 770
 Of thy poetick sons, be solemn praise
 And everlasting marks of honour paid
 To the true Lover and the Nut-brown Maid. 773

FINIS.



